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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a program of master's level professional development for experienced educators, discussing school change, teacher leadership, and reculturing of curriculum and schools. The program emphasizes integration of theory and practice, defining curriculum in ways that accord teachers their rightful place in curriculum leadership. It highlights the concept of curricular cultures and expands critical consciousness about individuals' approaches to curriculum and practice. Using cultures of curriculum as a platform for inquiry, it encourages students to consider whether their curriculum work reflects disorganized efforts or an overarching goal enacted daily and embodied within a congruous set of practices. Students complete curriculum journals to examine influences on the process of curriculum selection and teaching within a particular setting. The opportunity for curriculum inquiry through the heuristic of curricular cultures provides a structure for examining the curriculum in classrooms and schools and contrasting the real and the ideal. Many participants have come to realize that their schools are not doing right by their students and that their own practice needs redirection. Many have changed their image of themselves as curriculum workers. Data from interviews with eight participants highlight four themes: the struggle against barriers, the struggle for goals and visions, engagement and action, and perceptions of leadership. (Contains 43 references.) (SM)

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Reculturing Curriculum: The Struggle for Curriculum Leadership

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As teacher educators, we have worked with practitioners in professional development programs to help them to understand curriculum, teaching, and school reform through the concept of *curricular cultures* (Joseph, Bravmann, Windschitl, Mikel & Green, 2000). The cultural lens permits a view of curriculum not just as explicit aims or plans, but as the experiences of teachers and students, the values held within classrooms, schools, and connections to the encompassing culture of the school. We have encouraged teachers to use a deliberative framework as a heuristic to name and imagine their personal vision as curriculum workers, examine norms and beliefs, look for irreconcilable conflicts of aims and practices, and envision curriculum as practices congruent with visions. We have offered models of curriculum work and systemic change so that educators could develop: a critical understanding of their practice within their particular school context; imagine alternative visions and actions – both pedagogical and political; and, articulate their moral commitment to their students and their communities. Finally, we have focused a great deal of the professional development on helping educators to engage in inquiry, particularly focused on taking action to improve the their classroom and schools.

We articulated the benefit of curricular cultures because of our belief in the power of a publicly conscious, unifying vision. A clear vision serves as a beacon to guide the articulation of goals, standards, and ideals, bring together ideas and desires, and become the catalyst for change. A thoughtful body of beliefs, then, serves to cohere what would otherwise be a succession of classroom activities with little integrity. In ordinary cultures of classrooms and schools, a distinct and meaningful vision is not required. Educational reformers (Fullan, 1993; Staessens & Vandenberghe; 1994) point to the force of a special vision in the process of successful change whereas the absence of such vision has been noted as a major obstacle to school reform. The creation of a curricular culture calls for teachers to profoundly change their view of curriculum and their sense of empowerment as curriculum workers.

We have learned from several years of working with teachers in very diverse school settings, that exposure to the idea of curricular cultures and models of classroom and systemic reform as well as support for teachers' leadership have created, to some degree, transformation in teachers' visions — their conceptions of curriculum and of themselves as curriculum workers. These changes can be seen on the classroom level as well as in schools, districts, communities, and teachers' involvement in their profession on local and national levels. In our paper, we will describe our practice as teacher educators, consider the insights that our students have had in our classes through their journals and reflections on learning, and consider the challenges that these teachers face in their struggle to reculture curriculum.

Reculturing in the Context of Curriculum Reform

Scholars suggest that despite a history of contradictory impulses, e.g., extant beliefs about the value of standardized curriculum vs. child-centered education (Cuban, 1993), classroom cultures have not been diverse; there has been a typical and deeply entrenched culture of classrooms and schools in twentieth-century America. In Goodlad's study of more than 1,000 classrooms (1984), he found an "extraordinary sameness" of learning environments featuring "bland, repetitive procedures of lecturing, questioning, monitoring, and quizzing" (p. 249). In *The Ecology of School Renewal*, Heckman (1987) describes prevailing conditions of American classrooms: "Most teachers talk most of the time; students sit, listen, do seatwork, and take tests. This occurs for approximately 85% of the 75% of the class time

devoted to instruction." Heckman went on to say that the studies of contemporary classroom cultures are similar to a study done at the turn of the century" (p. 70).

This prevailing culture is not necessarily unsystematic. Indeed, many teachers depended upon the regularities of curricula fashioned and organized by external intellectual authorities, inflexible models of instruction, and a narrow definition of learning. These limited vehicles of teaching and learning represent some of the most consistent and persistent phenomena known in the social and behavioral sciences (Sirotnik, 1983). In addition, the compulsion to cover material is antithetical to one of the primary aims of many progressive reforms, e.g., the deep and elaborate understanding of selected core ideas and democratic curriculum planning. Unfortunately, the de facto curriculum for many teachers is the increasingly encyclopedic textbook. These textbooks fuel the anxiety teachers feel to cover an ambitiously broad and desperately thin curriculum. This agenda encourages a culture of rote learning and precludes teachers from spending class time on authentic forms of inquiry. In such institutional environments, teaching and learning that is *not* pre-scripted and geared toward "right answers" is viewed with suspicion (Gabella, 1993).

More recently, we see some modification of the teacher-centered landscape (Cuban, 1993). Educators, gravitating toward student-centered instruction, adopt partial strategies that include establishing classroom learning centers, using various forms of cooperative learning, and incorporating project or problem-based learning — these activities typically integrated into a core of otherwise teacher-centered practices. Most teachers, however, limit students' participation in curriculum, denying them full partnership in planning of content and choice of learning activities. A recent study of middle schools undergoing reforms (Oakes, Quartz, Ryan, & Lipton, 2000) revealed that most teachers, administrators, and parents expected an educative classroom to be quiet and orderly with students seated and not talking to each other. Engagement meant students being attentive, but not speaking, gesturing, building, or moving about. Heterogeneous grouping was heavily resisted. From these descriptions, it is not difficult to infer that the dominant culture in schools is one of coping and compliance, where teachers control the intellectual activity in order to ensure uniform "exposure" to the curriculum and to maintain discipline. In response, students over time grow into the role of compliant, passive observers.

Classrooms with more student-centered activities do not necessarily signify coherent cultures of curriculum. Such classrooms do suggest, however, that modifications are emerging from the historically monolithic culture of schooling. Still, any deviation from the traditional structure is recognized as a special event. They are experiments — risky exceptions to the day-to-day business of schooling. Events, such as or empowering students to make meaningful curricular choices, developing poignant humanistic themes, or integrating class work with other subject areas challenge the entrenched practices and hierarchies of power. Generally, conversations about significant curricular reform are not heard in the dominant discourse; institutional text (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman 1995) - testing, procedures, and classroom management – characterizes most conversations around curriculum. In the discourse of teaching for excellent, "[o]ne looks in vain . . . for a concern with education as a potentially powerful vehicle for the renewal of a culture of active and meaningful citizenship (Shapiro, 1998, p. 54).

The standards movement, furthermore, now dominates the educational agenda and influences instruction, curriculum, assessment, promotion policies, and other aspects of school life (Smerdon, Burkam & Lee, 1999). The work of teachers is becoming more routinized as state education agencies and local school systems increasingly implement standardized curricula and use standardized achievement tests to assess performance of students, teachers, and schools. Since available texts and tests stress basic skills outcomes, teachers, in turn, are pressured to use methods of direct instruction to teach to the objectives of minimum competency and basic skills achievement tests (Darling-Hammond & Wise, 1985; Talbert & McLaughlin, 1993). Some teachers alter the subject matter in order to teach to the test itself (Rowan, 1990).

Historically, policy makers have sought to control curriculum and standardize teaching rather than to educate teachers to make more sophisticated choices about their own curriculum (Apple, 1982) and this trend continues today (Rogers, 1999). Granting teachers the authority to create curriculum is

often greeted with resistance from political conservatives who fear not only the teacher's autonomy in choosing content but also children's learning of critical thinking skills (Elliot, 1994). Such conservatives view teachers as technicians—called upon to implement classroom objectives that are tightly controlled and defined by others higher up on the administrative chain of command. Purpel and Shapiro (1995) argue that:

> Such a role increasingly precludes the involvement of teachers from any real authority for decision-making in the school. It robs them of the opportunity to think creatively about how they teach or what it is that should be taught . . . The deskilled teacher is required to teach with little consciousness or conscience about the fundamental values that he or she is trying to initiate in the classroom (p. 109).

Progressive reform, such as teaching for understanding, requires teachers to transcend the goals of the basic skills movement that began in the 1960's and that continue to figure prominently in the urban school improvement landscape (Carlson, 1992; Cuban, 1990; Little, 1993). Whereas the original purpose of this movement was to produce graduates who possessed basic literacy skills, more recently the public has acknowledged the need to emphasize higher levels of literacy, greater understanding of subject matter, technology, and the capability to learn and adapt to changing workplace demands. Paradoxically, while many states are urging educators to teach in ways that promote deeper student understandings, the pedagogy required for this is often actively discouraged by local and state policies. Such policies discourage teachers from spending time inquiring about their own practice and from adapting instruction to individual learners (Darling-Hammond, 1996).

In the public eye, the idea of progressive positions is usually framed as a questionable alternative to what already exists. The status quo is privileged by descriptors such as "basic," "historic," "fundamental," even "real" — while those who defend significant curricular change are faced with marginalizing descriptions of their approach as "alternative" or "experimental." Once more, alternative orientations are often seen as caricatures.

> Another way in which the "real" culture of schools perpetuates itself is through the tendency of traditional educators and the public to disdain any kind of curriculum work not part of the status quo, that which seems "abnormal." Caricatures abound when other alternatives are mentioned (no doubt, reinforced by popular culture), e.g., curriculum that calls attention to power relationships among people or groups of people are branded as radical and dangerous; child-centered approaches as non-academic, sentimental or indulgent; alternative schools as "hippy" or anything goes; and, a vigorous humanist education as "elitist." Albeit, even the prevalent curricular culture of preparation for the workplace receives stereotypical treatment from critics who assume that only a narrow, uncritical education devoid of intellect must occur. Caricatures may contain some truth, but they are overly simplistic and certainly not useful in curricular discourse leading to imagining alternatives. (Joseph, et al., p. 168).

In addition to the dominant public influences on the curriculum and entrenched school cultures, teachers' beliefs are formed by their own personal histories as learners. Most teachers are themselves products of traditional schooling. As students, they were exposed to teacher-centered instruction, fact-based subject matter, and drill and practice (Russell, 1993). This past furnishes teachers with mental models of instruction—models that shape behavior in powerful ways. Teachers use such models to imagine lessons in their classrooms, develop innovations, and plan for learning (Kennison, 1990); teachers are more likely to be guided not by instructional theories, but by the familiar images of what is proper and possible in classroom settings (Elbaz 1981; Russell, 1993; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981).

In the struggle to reconceptualize and create markedly different classroom environments, teachers face an uphill battle. Participants in progressive reforms have always found that, not only was it difficult

to replace old school norms with new ones, but that they were responsible for persuading pupils, colleagues, parents, and school boards to accept these new patterns as normal and desirable. Teachers who want to change the "grammar of schooling" today need to enlist the support of administrators who believe (or can be convinced) that progressive curriculum serves the mission of the school (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Spillane and Thompson (1997) argue that districts' capacity to support reform rests in key administrators' and teacher leaders' capacity to grasp the central reform ideas for themselves and to help others in the district to learn them. Fosnot (1996) provides a telling example of one new teacher - a graduate of a teacher education program that explicitly promoted constructivist pedagogy – who attempted to incorporate a writing workshop and a literature-based reading program into her second grade instruction. A number of vocal and influential parents began to complain that skill pages were not coming home. The principal immediately scheduled an observation and subsequently demanded that she uses the basal reader and spelling text as well as demonstrates the use of praise and reinforcement. The teacher and her mentor from the teacher education program scheduled a parent open house to explain the writing program and held "authors teas" where parents could read pieces published by the students. Faculty from the teacher education program held in-services for the administrators. By February, the tide had turned.

Administrators must be open to suggestions for changes such as implementing block scheduling or integrating the curriculum, perhaps even arranging for interested teachers to be placed together in team teaching situations that are premised on the constructivist approach. Just as importantly, administrators must take the lead in defending a "less is more" curriculum approach. Administrators, as instructional leaders in schools, must make teachers feel secure about weaning themselves from the text and the "coverage mentality." Even with recognition of the need for reculturing, a deliberate transformation of curriculum and schooling - especially one that promotes a serious alternative to what currently dominates - requires an institutional infrastructure of appropriate resources, political legitimacy, and administrative authorization. Teachers need time, materials, facilitative schedules, access to learning sites and sources, and collegial relationships. In this current educational climate, such improvements will not be given to teachers; rather, they must make demands on their school systems to allow themselves to work creatively as professionals and to make significant change for their own students.

Teachers and administrators together must also be prepared to go on record with the school community about why the beliefs and practices associated with progressive curriculum reforms are congruent with the community's vision of education. Having a well-articulated public philosophy of education is particularly important because challenging the status quo of schooling means risk-taking and a divergence from business as usual. In communicating with the larger school community, educators should have a solidly grounded rationale for their curriculum and their teaching methods. With curriculum that is contrary to historical and cultural norms, it is especially important that this rationale be well founded, coherent, and applicable to the local school context. Community members will undoubtedly be suspicious of teaching methods that are so different from the ones they remember as students and sounding much like a laissez-faire approach to schooling. This task will not be as intimidating if teachers mindfully link their understanding of classroom learning to the larger goals of education, to the articulation of vision. When student understanding becomes more problematic and knowledge less absolute (as in the child-centered, constructivist, democratic, or liberatory cultures of curriculum), one's own understandings are soon more uncertain as well (Ball, 1993) — and, being confronted with one's own uncertainties can make a teacher feel inadequate and other educational stakeholders less trusting.

Often, however, it is not vision that drives teachers' curriculum work. Huberman uses the term "bricolage" or "tinkering" (1992, 1995) to describe how many teachers change their practice. They are like artisans, picking up new techniques here, new activities there, a new piece of curricular material somewhere else. Teachers choose techniques, activities, materials that seem to fit their own styles, settings, and students, then adjust them on the basis of their own goals and experiences. This type of tinkering is quite practical, but it is also quite conservative. It enables a teacher to preserve a set of fundamental ideas about subject matter, teaching, and learning. As Hargreaves (1994) observes, teachers often rely on "safe simulations" when testing out new approaches. These are superficial imitations of new

practices that do not disrupt the cultural norms of the school. These include cooperative learning, or student projects that are executed in overly controlled settings, bearing little resemblance to the conditions required for educativity (Hargreaves, 1994). Clearly, efforts at tinkering do not change fundamental beliefs about learners and teachers, norms, and relationships.

Thus, for many teachers, changing curriculum is a struggle — posing moral, intellectual, and practical challenges. It is difficult to imagine coherent curricular cultures within school cultures and the wider society that seldom express a passion or hope for education to nurture human and humane potential of individual and communities. Any claim for school change that centers on "reculturing" curriculum is momentous for teachers' personal professional pathways and curriculum reform.

The Experienced Educator Program

The focus of this paper is our work as teacher educators in a program of master's level professional development for experienced educators. For the past several years, two of the authors (Joseph and Mikel) have co-chaired the Experienced Educator Program and for the past decade have taught classes, advised students in program development and research experiences, and helped to develop the program's curriculum in its two variations (on campus and at distant sites). The "we" in our voice in this paper primarily refers to the experiences of the two authors who have worked with students in this program. The third author (Windschitl) has participated in the development of this paper through his ideas and expertise in the literature of school change and teacher leadership and his contribution to our understanding of "reculturing" curriculum and schools.

We, individually, teach several of the core courses Curriculum & Teaching (Joseph), the Leadership & Reform (Mikel), and Inquiry & Research (both) core courses in the Campus-Based and Site-Based Programs, [1] guide inquiry projects, and teach a number of other student-selected courses. Although we will illustrate the learning in the program with some of the written description from students in the campus program, in particular, we will pay attention in this paper to our collaboration as teacher educators in a recent cohort in the Site-Based Program.

The students in the Experienced Educator Program are drawn from urban, suburban, and rural-small-town schools and other educational settings. The Campus-Based Program has students who work in a variety of settings, K-12 classrooms, alternative schools and after-school programs, museums and theatre organizations, community colleges, and community adult education settings. The Site-Based Program's students generally teach in K-12 schools and live and work at some distance from the university's campus. The Site-Based Program is a cohort model with cohorts generally around 15 to 20 students. Although the campus students are not in a cohort, they have developed close relationships with many of the students in their program through their classes.

There are five goals of the Experienced Educator Program: (1) Knowledge of the conceptual domains of the professional core areas as well as the commitment to the ideals of justice and caring embodied in these core areas; (2) Evidence of reflective practice by articulating and critiquing personal as well as the social and political beliefs and values that influence students' work as educators; (3) Accomplishment of systematic investigation into educational phenomena, practice, and-or problems; (4) Demonstration of collaborative skills and leadership for the betterment of schools or other educational initiatives in various professional, public, and-organizational arenas and; (5) Broadening and deepening of knowledge and skills in an area of deep personal significance.

A major theme of our program is the integration of theory and practice. We believe that exposure to sophisticated ideas from such areas as curriculum and research studies allows teachers to consider themselves transformative intellectuals and curriculum leaders because they understand ideas within the context of their practice and the communities in which they work. This integration is highlighted within students' written assignments and research, but also in classes. The classes in our program are built around small group work focusing on understanding texts, problem solving, and conceptualizing experiences. Specifically, our students have grappled with the nature of racism and inequality in the larger social context and in their own schools and classrooms, have explored such concepts from curriculum

studies as explicit, implicit, and null curriculum (Eisner, 1985), have studied examples of teacher leadership to transform classrooms and schools, and have developed their sense of competence and competence as researchers and "consumers" of research. In addition, we have considered the courses as complementary to each other.

The form of reflection that we have encouraged in our program has not excluded personal introspection as teachers have experienced quite a bit of soul-searching and emotional moments in classes and while writing journals about their conflicts with others as well as their self-doubts about what they are accomplishing as educators. However, the primary focus for us has been more of an analytical reflection, as discussed by Reid, McCallum and Dobbins (1998) in that reflective practice is seen as "systematically and critically interrogating educational theory and practice" (p. 255). We have encouraged both historical and political understanding of the curriculum as well as understanding of the social, political, economic, and cultural influences upon curriculum.

The framework of the Master of Arts in Education Experienced Educator Program has three distinct but integrated parts: Core Courses, Student-Selected Areas, and an Inquiry Project. In each of the core courses, a knowledge base in contemporary and historical educational literature is offered along with parallel work involving experiential study in classrooms, schools, and the community. The core areas are Diversity & Equity, Curriculum & Teaching, Leadership & Reform, and Inquiry & Research. In addition, the Site-Based Program requires a course in School and Community Relations. The focus of the student-selected areas are determined primarily by individual students in the Campus program and are shaped more by the group in the Site-Based Program; the students in the Site-Based Program also have Leadership Seminars that focus on their individual interests and action research. Finally, the Inquiry Project – its development through literature and experientially data collection and interpretation of data – draws from the core areas and integrates the students' interests.

From the Diversity & Equity, Curriculum & Teaching, and Leadership & Reform core courses, students have often identified areas of interest that they wish to pursue in greater depth in the program. Approximately mid-way through their program, they take the Inquiry & Research core course and learn how to develop a research proposal and have experience collecting and analyzing qualitative data. The final segment of the program consists of the inquiry project in which students pose questions that will help them improve their work as educators or in some way contribute to knowledge about education and develop methods to gain understanding of their questions and its potential answers. For many of the students who have their own practice in classrooms and other educational settings, the nature of their inquiry is teacher research or action research. [2] Often times the issues and concerns articulated in the core courses become the bases for systematic inquiry and trying to create change.

Recent examples of these projects include efforts to revitalize professional development within teachers' schools, developing study groups with parents, teachers, and administrators to study disproportionality within an urban elementary school, enhancement of inclusion practices for children in both special education and regular education, liberatory pedagogy in pre-schools, middle schools, and high schools, and developing emergent literacy curriculum for Native-American children. Clearly, in several of the inquiry projects, students have paid attention to the concept of "reculturing" – the need to change the norms, beliefs, and everyday behaviors within classrooms and schools. The reculturing efforts have especially revealed our students' moral commitment to their pupils' self-actualization, their creation of meaningful, authentic learning, and the democratizing of education.

Overall, the goals and students' experiences and accomplishments in our program complement the ideas held by MacPherson and Brooker (2000) about the requisites for teacher education program: "(1) defining curriculum in ways that accord teachers their rightful place in curriculum leadership; (2) teaching curriculum . . . in learning environments which give teachers a growing sense of competence and confidence to assume their place in curriculum leadership; (3) collaborating with personnel in broader policy and systematic levels as to how teachers may be supported and sustained in their efforts to be authentically included in curriculum leadership action . . . . " (pp. 82-83).

Curriculum Inquiry

We have introduced the concept of curricular cultures within the Experienced Educator Program and have assigned *Cultures of Curriculum* (Joseph, et al., 2002) within the core course, Curriculum & Teaching, for expanding critical consciousness about individuals' approaches to curriculum and practice. Using "cultures of curriculum" as a platform for inquiry, we wish to encourage our students to consider if their curriculum work reflects a melange of unarticulated methods and purposes, a struggle to maintain a coherent vision amidst many competing pressures, or an overarching aim enacted daily and embodied within a congruous set of practices. This concept remains a referent for understanding school and classroom reform throughout the program.

Reflective experiences of the Curriculum & Teaching core course have emerged from "Lived Curriculum Journals." The aim of these assignments is an examination of curriculum — including the myriad of influences that affect the process of curriculum selection and teaching, e.g., how decisions are made and enacted within a classroom, the beliefs that influence curriculum, and the societal forces that interplay with pedagogical decisions. Students can choose various foci for their studies within the school: a classroom (their own or others'), particular curriculum work in their practice, or the study of schools and other educational forums within the community. [3]

This assignment provided for in-depth understanding and reflection and students were requested not to write a potpourri but a focus on one particular setting. The journal entailed "hands-on" (or "eyes-on") involvement through observations, interviews, as well as documents. By writing this assignment in intervals, students were encouraged to pace their studies throughout the quarter and to reflect knowledge and understanding of course readings and topics. Each journal was to have a focus (or several) and be written as a coherent paper rather than being stream-of-consciousness journal. Along with the journals, experiential assignments were assigned so that students took notes on, e. g., how values were explicitly and implicitly taught in their schools and what their own students would most like to learn in school and out of school.

By listening to students' conversations in class and by reading their journals and self-evaluation of their learning at the end of the core class, Curriculum & Teaching, it is apparent to us that a series of understandings occur in this core course: (1) appreciation of the complexity of the concepts from curriculum studies and the concept of curriculum as culture as well as the gradual comfort with application of these concepts to personal practice and schools; (2) awareness of the pervasiveness of the dominant culture of schooling in contemporary times and-or the "ad hocness" of the curriculum in many schools; (3) realization that the structure of schooling itself must change to permit alternative visions of curriculum to exist; (4) consciousness of the need to create viable counter cultures of curriculum through changing of norms and beliefs about education; finally, (5) the stance that teachers must become curricular leaders to make reculturing possible.

Selections from students' journals and self-evaluations illustrate some of the insights that lead our students to understand the nature of the curriculum work in and cultures of their classrooms and schools. To begin, when our students first consider what is the purpose of education in their schools, some realize that the question of having a purpose is in itself somewhat alien. To illustrate, a high school teacher wrote in his first lived curriculum journal: "Through various observations in a couple classrooms and conversations with students and faculty, I found that there is a huge range of perceptions about 'what schools are for?' I was surprised to find that many of the faculty were actually perplexed by the question and did not seem to have a clear response to it."

Often students noticed that there is a "hodge-podge" of educational aims in public and private schools:

> [My school] is pulled in countless directions in regards to its curriculum. There are eight different reading programs, some pullout, some intended for the classroom. There are three math curricula and there even exits a [published] curriculum for teaching social skills. With all of these paid kits, teachers at [my school] are overwhelmed with all the many programs which are presented to

> them. The school is an antithesis of "less is more," as teachers struggle to implement the curriculum before them. I addition to the problem of many curricula, [they] are often philosophically opposed to each other . . . . The dialogue in class and the book have both made me question on a much deeper level what the curricula are at the school and the culture which is brought about by those curricula.(Elementary School Teacher)

Moreover, in public schools, and even in some alternative schools that have more conscious, articulated missions, students have found discrepancies between the mission of schools and the practice that they observed and that a variety of educational purposes are enacted.

> The most disturbing theme was a recurring one. All of the 11 students [that I surveyed] concluded that they want to follow the rules, or something to that effect. This began my thinking about [how] students really see school. If the only theme congruent with each student was the idea of behaving in class, I wonder what we are really teaching kids. Are we keeping their interest? Are we really wanting to turn them into life-long learners as we state in our [the school's] mission statement. I do believe that management in the classroom is completely important to be able to even begin a lesson. But I am wondering of students are getting the wrong message about what is really important in school. (Elementary School Teacher)

For many of our students, the lens of culture has allowed them to become aware of the culture of their classrooms and schools. Our students wrote about how they used the concept of curricular cultures to consider their own practice. For example, an elementary school teacher mentioned that "I had *never* before thought about how my classroom practice is influenced by culture. I had never taken the time to consider how our lives are organized around culture! I feel like I've developed a cultural consciousness of my own after thinking and reflecting about how my values and beliefs permeate my classroom and instruction." Or, as a middle school teacher explained, "I was shocked to see how germane the examination of curricular culture was to my own personal struggle in the classroom. My lack of clear curricular vision and my tendency to lump that values and goals of a variety of curricular cultures had resulted in much confusion and frustration. With a clear curricular vision, I can more easily clarify what I expect in the classroom."

As we wrote in *Cultures of Curriculum* (2000):

> Anthropologists caution that we usually are unaware of the culture that surrounds us because culture appears as usual life, what seems normal or natural. "If a fish were to become an anthropologist, the last thing it would discover would be water" (in Spindler, 1982, p. 24). This saying, attributed to anthropologist Margaret Mead, warns us that familiarity with the surrounding environment makes it terribly difficult to perceive the medium in which we live. In the normal, undisturbed course of living, we seldom recognize that it is our culture that influences what we take in and pay attention to, what choices we consider to be normal, and what we intend to do about those choices (Hall, 1977). Likewise, it is not obvious how cultural knowledge becomes communicated or internalized; directives about how to live one's life often remain unconscious or, at the very least, unexamined. (p. 17)

As we encouraged our students to imagine themselves as anthropologists, they began to see the "water" that surrounds them, in particular, the dominant paradigms that we have referred to as "Training for Work and Survival." They observed the existence of this paradigm in the demands of teaching in this current educational climate as well as their pupils' own assumptions about schooling.

> I am totally overwhelmed in what I have seen that connects to our readings. This surprises me because we are a primary school and most of our readings were concerned with high school and

junior high school . . . . I hear the complaints of our third grade teachers having to take the time to "teach to the test" and being overwhelmed with mandated curriculum being taught with not enough time to go into the proper depth with the students. (Elementary School Teacher)

What is the real purpose of education? Every student I talked to said it was to have a financially secure future. Finishing high school and going to college will make them smarter, smarter equals more respect, and more respect equals money. "How about the teachers, many of who have more than four-year college degrees, but not getting a lot of money or respect?' I asked . . . Then they become silent. Then someone said, "Well, I guess we learn for knowledge because we want to know." Maybe they do want to know, but how much of this knowledge is sticking with them when we feed them what to learn? If they are learning for knowledge, why is the first question that is asked, "Do we have to know that for the test?" (High School Teacher)

Through this examination of curriculum through the lens of culture and the experiential activities that focused on learning about colleagues, community and pupils, new understandings developed about the nature of students' own curriculum work. They began to imagine creating a curricular culture that reflects their ideals. Although some students did not yet understand exactly what actions might follow their new realizations, others began to conceive of ways in which they could shape or change their practice.

I knew pedagogical orientations used in schools throughout the country and world were diverse and opposing. It had not occurred to me to explore them on my own in any context, let alone the one in which I will find myself . . . . . [I]t was like finding an empty closet, full of hangers, all waiting to have a garment hung upon them. I spent a considerable amount of time searching through those clothes to find something to wear! In all the chapters of the text, I found something on which to reflect and respond. It was with some delight [that] I read the chapter on the constructivist curricular culture. I now have a model to use as guide in my own work. I realize from the reading, discussion, and my continuing practice, that finding the right fit now may not assure its continued success, but [it] may give me a grounding for what I will do in the future. (Community College Instructor)

This course helped give me a new perspective on my own role in developing curriculum . . . . On the one hand, I felt a bit convicted concerning my lack of attention to certain aspects of curriculum. For example, I feel I could do a much better job of involving my students in the development of curriculum, as described in the chapter, "Deliberating Democracy." In truth, I have always vaguely felt that this would be a good idea, but found that I had a hard time breaking loose from the traditional chains of the idea of "teacher as dictator." Also, I felt some small pangs of guilt over the fact that I have done little with developing the potential of my subject area for challenging students to confront the dominant order.

The learning that has had the greatest impact on me, though, is the knowledge that I gained about my students. The experiential assignments opened another window into the hearts and minds of my students that I had never tried looking through before. I consider myself a caring, compassionate teacher who takes the time to get to know her students . . . . I realize now that I was not giving my second graders enough credit. They are capable of even deeper thinking and analysis than I thought possible, and I am sure that this is true at all grade levels. It is so important to ask questions that give students this opportunity, both to encourage their critical thinking, and to let us in to see what they are really capable of thinking and feeling. My goal for future years is to ask some of the questions that we used for these assignments, maybe once toward the beginning of the year, in order to get to know these children . . . . (Elementary School Teacher)

Crucial to our argument in cultures of curriculum is the need for vision to guide curriculum. In conversations in class, it was clear that students had become critical of the "ad hoc" curriculum of a little this and a little that. They began to talk about the need for vision whereas most of the daily discourse of schools was on the technology of teaching and testing. In self-evaluations, students wrote about the conglomeration of orientations exist at their schools and their awareness of the importance of vision.

> My brain is fired up from this [quarter] and I find myself consistently analyzing classroom and school situations in terms of different cultures of curriculum. I feel that one of the main concepts I am walking away with is that so many teachers and schools, and our education system as a whole, try to cover too many bases. While watching teachers at a few schools, I was struck by how many styles and philosophies the implement throughout the day. I am currently left with the thought that the best teachers I know are those who have a vision for their students and most everything revolves around that vision . . . . It's almost like one needs an umbrella that is the core vision of your culture and underneath that you pulling the methods and sub-cultures that will enhance this vision. What I hope is to continue developing my vision in order to have it stand tall and bold in the face of the storms that hit our field. (Elementary School Teacher)

> In my readings of various cultures of curriculum, my reasons for and methods of teaching have been challenged. In special education, the culture of curriculum, although child-centered, is vocational. Even on the elementary level, we are thinking ahead to what the child will be doing for work . . . . In examining the different cultures, I realize the vision I have for my classroom is mainly vocationally based and I don't like that at all. I didn't like school when it felt like I "had" to learn something and I definitely see the same reaction with my kids when I'm dictating to them what they need to learn. I am really calling into question whether my class is child-centered or not . . . . If we are rationalizing this as preparation for the work force, then it's no wonder we have disinterested students. Most of the curricular cultures examined during this course seem to connect the student with society as a whole, but through self-discovery, common human experiences, cultural experiences, and beliefs systems, and not just work-worker relationships. I am refocused on believing that children should grow to make society a better place, rather than to maintain the status quo. *Elementary School Teacher*

> As I continued to read, I found that . . . Constructing Understanding was describing the methods I had learned in teacher education. I had never thought about constructivism being a curriculum. As I have stated in past journal responses, the information contained in this chapter invigorated me. It was as if a fog was disappearing and a clear crisp picture was emerging. It was information that I found very familiar and comforting. I held, and still hold, this method as what was-is true and right for me personally, as an educator . . . . Yet due to the social as well as political demands that arose, I had drifted from this culture. Test scores, new texts to learn, after-school programs, family life and many aspects of my job and personal world had pulled my focus from where I wanted to be. Furthermore, the readings in *Cultures of Curriculum* introduced me to other curriculums that appealed to my style. . . . . From the little I have learned about [Deliberating Democracy], it would also seem that it could cc xist with the constructivist culture. This reading assignment (on constructivism) couldn't have come at a better time. This year I have really been questioning my teaching style . . . . By reading the chapters "Developing Self and Spirit" and also "Constructing Understanding," my thoughts and ideas were renewed. I was rejuvenated. They reminded me of what I most enjoy and hold dear about learning with students. This is the way I want to teach every year, not just here and there . . . . (Middle School Teacher)

The study of curricular cultures as well as their exposure to various issues and models relating to school reform helped our students to identify specific problems upon which they could begin to take action. Our students began to stake out positions, took steps to forward their convictions into action, and developed the confidence to state their positions publicly within their schools and with parents. Several examples of journals and self-evaluations illustrate how our students began to identify issues of concern and to make changes in their classrooms and their schools.

> One of the challenges I have found myself struggling with is the "teaching to the tests" issue. We have discussed this many times in class and we always come back to, how are we supposed to meet all of our standards and teach everything we are asked to teach if on that test they are going to be asked to do really only reading, writing and math? Once again, the science, art, health and social studies get pushed out . . . . One question I continually ask myself is: why are students who are on an IEP and the age of a fourth grader required to take the fourth grade WASL (Washington Assessment of Student Learning)? Obviously they are on an IEP for a reason. How is that fair? How are those students going to feel successful and comfortable with taking test if it is above the level that they have been working at the whole school year and then expected to do well? (Elementary School Teacher)

The teacher who realized her desire to reconnect to her previous ideal of constructivist teaching wrote about how she began to modify her practice:

> As I finished reading this week's assignment, I realized that I could start making changes right now. So, I pulled the class together and we discussed what is was that we didn't like about the report, how we could change it, and alternatives to how we would display the information and knowledge we would gain. We filled the board with ideas and you should have seen the glimmer in their eyes . . . Though we only have just a few weeks left in this school year, I am going to put forth the effort that makes me feel like I am doing what is "right." I have already [begun] collecting ideas for next year, and can't wait to implement them.(Middle School Teacher)

Some of the teachers identified a problem and began to plan for challenging the existing curriculum in their schools:

> I am a first year teacher and like my new job, I have had a *lot* to learn this year! At the beginning of the year, I took the scripted curriculum and followed it because that was what I was supposed to do . . . especially being a first year teacher. I would not have dared to question it, however, not all the district curricula have aligned with my personal beliefs. I have always been a proponent of learning theories that support involving the whole child in learning. I believe in creative, in depth, theme based integrated curriculum, but following the scripted curriculum was contrary to what I support. Up to this point, I have done my best to try to balance between the scripted curriculum and my students' interests, but it's been challenging. I had never though about how I could plan curriculum or at least change it until this class. After taking this class, it *has* become a priority to me. What I have decided to do is talk to my building principal and try to get permission to make some changes next year. I would like to eliminate at least one of the "kits" that I am supposed to teach from (which are horrible) and allow the kids free choice to earn about what they wish for a quarter. (Elementary School Teacher)

> Due to discussions in this class, as well as in Leadership & Change, several teachers at our school have started to come together to discuss how we can work to effectively change the negatives cultures which exist within our school. Sometimes the discussions are promising, and sometimes they are disheartening. It is hard to imaging the change that we would like to take place actually

occurs with so few on board. The upside to this is that many changes we have read about started in much the same way . . . . I am beginning to look for opportunities in which I can speak for those who believe in reform. In the past I have been on numerous committees. But due to my number of years of experience, I never really voiced what I was thinking.

Others began to interact in different ways with their colleagues, bringing ideas about curriculum into awareness outside of their classrooms. In her self-evaluation, an elementary school teacher explains, "I am also feeling more confident speaking to my fellow teachers about our school culture and what messages we are sending to students not offering any music or art classes and concentrating on math, reading, and discipline." This awareness has allowed her to take action toward curriculum leadership – defining a position and defending it. Another elementary school teacher wrote: "I feel passionate about developing better ways for teachers to communicate with each other so students will be the central focus from day one . . . . My intentions are to share my learning from this course and hopefully begin the process of reform, one teacher at a time."

In summary, the opportunities for curriculum inquiry through the heuristic of curricular cultures provided a structure to examine the curriculum in classrooms and schools and to contrast the real with the ideal. Many of the teachers in our classes experienced painful realizations that schools were not doing right by their students and that their own practice needed redirection. Moreover, the experience of curriculum inquiry was the catalyst for some teachers to re-direct their practice and to begin to change their image of themselves as curriculum workers in their classrooms and schools.

Reculturing and the Struggle for Curriculum Leadership

Over time, we have seen how our students' awareness of ad hoc curriculum as well as the distance between their hopes for themselves as educators and the reality of their practice has become the catalyst for taking action to change the culture of their classrooms and schools. There have been numerous examples, in particular through action research projects, of these changes, e.g., high school teachers developing critical pedagogy in their classrooms, middle school teachers working with their colleagues to have significant discussions about curriculum and teaching in school-wide forums, elementary school teachers making substantial changes in their practice to foster meaningful learning and beneficial social experiences for children out of the mainstream because they are in special education or are new immigrants.

In this section, we will focus on eight teachers who we interviewed after they had been students in the Experienced Educator Program for nearly one year and who had begun collecting data for their inquiry projects. These teachers were chosen because they represent to us a cross-section of the type of work that K-12 teachers in classrooms have done in the Experienced Educator Program, mirroring similar attempts to change practice and assume curriculum leadership. We did not attempt to select a cross section according to gender, experiences, or teaching situations. The teachers, more importantly, currently are in the midst of their efforts to bring about change in their classrooms and schools and could provide us a sense of the immediacy of their lives and work. Moreover, our understanding of the teachers as educators and as people have been informed by our knowledge of theirs discussions in classes and informal conversations.

A brief description of the interviewees, their schools, and their inquiry projects follows:

GABE is a high school teacher who has taught foreign language for more than 10 years. He currently works in a district that can be characterized as small town-suburban. His inquiry project is focused on high school students tutoring elementary school students in foreign language.

RACHEL is a second-year middle-school social studies teacher working in a suburban-small-town community. Her research is the study of strategies that will put into practice ideas for authentic learning that she has developed from the conclusions from brain-based research.

NICOLE is a second-year elementary school teacher working in a suburban district in a first-grade classroom. Her inquiry project, which she is conducting dually with Kate, another student in the master's cohort, is focused on the development of curriculum for early literacy that reflects best practices and responds to the particular needs of her students as well as the mandates and resources of her school and district.

KATE also is a second-year elementary school teacher who works in the school district of a medium-sized city. She is conducting a dual inquiry project with Nicole as described above.

NANCY has been teaching for several years. She shares a second-grade class classroom with a colleague who also is working half time to be home with a small child. Nancy takes the morning period of time and primarily teaches reading & writing in a suburban-small town community. Her inquiry is the development of a parent-child reading group after school, with an eye toward the possibility of incorporating the learning and inter-relational dynamics of the reading group into her classroom curriculum

HOPE is a second-grade teacher in a community that is small town-rural. She has taught for more than 5 years. Although teaching general education students for that time, she has been quite involved in mainstreaming and inclusion programs for special education students, and has continuously made a place for special needs students in her classroom. Her research project is about inclusion and reverse inclusion in which regular education students join special education classes to serve as peer mentors for special needs students. She also is the mother of small children.

BARBARA is a special education teacher in her second year, working in an elementary school in a suburban district. She is assigned to a self-contained special education classroom that mostly serves autistic children. Her inquiry project seeks to open closer relationships and enhanced understanding between special education students and teachers and their general education counterpart teachers and students. Although promoting academic achievement is a goal of the project, deepening human connections and appreciation for difference is its central purpose.

JANE is a fourth-grade teacher in a suburban-urban district. She has taught for five years, and has worked frequently in that time with so-called "gifted" or "highly capable" students. Her research interest is focused on constructivist mathematics teaching & teacher collaboration, in particular, asking: what kinds of collaboration among teachers lead to more constructivist math teaching?

As we analyzed the interviews [4] within the context of our knowledge of these teachers' work in our core courses and their development of inquiry projects, we recognized four themes that capture a sense of their experiences: (1) The Struggle Against – how energies are spent in activities that are make reculturing difficult and the barriers perceived to ideals of good practice and curriculum leadership; (2) The Struggle For – their goals and visions, their growing consciousness of what might be; (3) Engagement and Action – evidence of making changes, the context of their actions, resistance, commitment; and, (4) Perceptions of Leadership — images of self as leader in the classroom, school and other terrain.

The Struggle Against

The interviews support what we have learned from many teachers over the years, that the "daily grind" (Jackson, 1968) of teaching leaves little time for making major changes to practice or providing leadership. The interviewees talked about a great deal of their energies spent in daily work that includes classroom management, grading papers, fitting in teaching into tight windows of time (especially in the

case of Molly who works half-time,and Hope who has to balance between her roles as teacher and mother), and dealing with grade-level standards. Barbara, a special education teacher, explained that "most of my energy goes into creating and adapting work for my special education students" and documenting evidence that students are meeting the goals of their IEP's.

Several of the teachers find that their energies center on the very complicated work that has been necessary for them to participate in their research projects and overall school change. Energy is spent on scheduling pupils who go to other classrooms, e.g., Gabe's high school students and Hope's elementary-school students who participate in special education classes. Barbara also discussed how much time it takes to coordinate her schedule with regular education teachers to allow for peer tutoring. This work, although not opposed by school personnel, apparently is added on to already very busy days.

Two of the interviews, however, did not give us a sense that their practice and efforts to make change were depleting their energies. Rachel, who has been creating a curriculum of authentic learning in her social studies classroom, and Jane, who has been involved in teacher collaboration for constructivist math education, seemed very energized and did not mention difficulties about accomplishing their work.

We characterize the teachers' descriptions of other forces and events in their working lives as not just energy-draining work but as various kinds of barriers to reculturing their classrooms and schools. Among these forces are standardized testing, lack of resources and the fragmentation of the school day, and lack of support and understanding of one's work or change from colleagues.

Several of the teachers mentioned how standardized outcomes testing thwart constructivist or authentic learning. Jane noted that "standards are hindering for teachers who are not creative and that the standards list is daunting." Hope related the standardized testing to "forces you don't control as a teacher" and called attention to a real problem for her as an education, "test scores don't measure social gains." Nicole and Kate (in a joint interview) in particular dwelled on how the requirements of state standardized testing affect their practice and raise moral dilemmas for them. Nicole commented that the standardized outcomes "control every moment of the day" and that she has to "push, push, push" her students though. She also explained that she knows that this testing is not right but she does it despite her concern that "kids are getting test anxiety." Kate feels the force of external pressures and that these external demands are at odds with what she believes is good for children. Expectations of the tests require her to teach what is developmentally inappropriate. Kate further commented, "The District pressures for teaching to standardized tests, even though there has been a great improvement in test scores, but that is not enough. There is pressure to get higher and higher scores, even if you've had huge growth the previous year."

Two of the teachers focused on barriers in the organization of schooling, including the systems in place for funding. Jane described how she struggles with the lack of time; her work collaborating with other teachers is hindered by the lack of time set aside for teachers to debrief their teaching before engaging in further curriculum planning. She also understands that the fragmentation of the school day, especially from pull-out program that remove children from classrooms, is a obstacle to integrated curriculum and constructivist teaching. Jane suggested wants the school day to be longer with longer blocks of teaching time. Barbara focused on the predicament that "special education teachers aren't provided with resources, but are expected to somehow have the variety necessary to meet the needs of my diverse learners." Barbara described how the structure of schooling, in particular, the support of administrators, can hinder her work as a special education teacher. She explained,

> Special Education administrators greatly impact my ability to teach effectively. Lack of special education administration's support, whether it be financial or decision making that impacts my program (especially when without my input), impacts my ability to provide curriculum that suits my student's diverse learning needs and limitations.

The decision of administrators to unfairly distribute resources so that general education students do well on state testing was Barbara's fundamental criticism:

> I've realized that most of the district's decisions concerning students' outcomes relate specifically to general education students. Money is supposed to be available for special education students, but can be used by building principals how they see fit. This leads to special education teachers not having the resources necessary for their students and the added burden of using their own money for what is absolutely necessary. It appears that principals don't necessarily concern themselves with special education learning and outcomes. They primarily relate the standards and district's education philosophy to that of the general education student. Special education administrators mainly concern themselves with setting up programs and placing students. Once this piece is done they tend to forget about what it takes to pull together the place where these students will go to learn. Just as the district has specialists working to find and implement better curriculums for the general education population, they should have and do the same for special education students.

Barbara concluded with an even sharper critique of the educational system that she has experienced:

> Administrators and principals create hindrances for teachers to work around when they dictate any changes and goals they've decided on . . . . Administration has too much power and room to really miss-abuse their position. This top-heavy system will almost always tip and crash with such an imbalance.

Finally, several teachers described the lack of support from colleagues and fellow teachers' "business as usual" mentality as hindrances to curriculum transformation and leadership. Rachel noted that her colleagues tell her to adhere to an "ad hoc" curriculum and encourage to do so, too. When she talks with colleagues, they say, "You don't want to do everything one way, you should do a little of each way – you've then got yourself covered if you do a little bit of everything." Nancy, who has been teaching only a few years, has faced a situation in which she feels unsupported for making curriculum changes:

> At my grade level, teachers have been teaching a long time and they more or less do things their way, and they are the leaders, there isn't a spot for me within the grade level to be a leader, and so we can kind of share but they have been running the show for a long time . . . . There is a lot of support available if I want to go their way, but I don't want to go their way.

Jane, who has focused especially on teacher collaboration in her research, describes how her work with other teachers is challenging. She talked about how some teachers "hug the textbook" and how constructivist teaching "scares the pants off people" and that "it is scary for teachers when curriculum is not orderly and sequential." She also sees that teachers say they like the idea [of constructivist teaching] but they are doubtful, "they say "'this isn't going to happen.'" Jane also must deal with the difficulty of "working with teachers who have experienced cycles of reform." Jane also felt concern when teachers change their curriculum to constructivist teaching and then in the following year the new teacher does not follow suit. "It is hard for kids and parents when there isn't continuity."

Overall, the "struggle against" is perceived differently by the teachers depending on their own sense of the barriers that affect them as curriculum workers. Several understand these obstacles as limitations of time and resources that affect their daily lives in the classroom whereas others have more of a sense of the systemic forces that influence schooling, in particular, inequality of resources and the strong cultural norms that profoundly influence beliefs and norms.

The Struggle For

As we spoke with the teachers interviewed it became increasing evident that in each case they were continually in the process of gaining insight, information, and notions about ways in which to improve their curriculum and, indeed, in many instance, to further the learning environment of their schools more broadly. The sources of this growing consciousness were several: conversations with other teachers; through the usual professional networks in which information and lore is communicated, and frequently renewed or challenged; deliberate attempts to seek out ideas for new approaches, strategies, resources, or timing of curriculum activities; the systematic inquiry they were pursuing in their master's program, either through search of various scholarly, professional, or journalistic literatures or through formal or more informal direct investigations they were making in connection with independent studies (which are termed "clinical/action studies") or their culminating inquiry project.

In all these modes of teachers' growing awareness their own imagination seems more attuned to possibility. They are more alert, or more generative in their response to situations and opportunities presented. Several of the teachers pointed directly to a kind of momentum that arose as they began intently to pursue new directions, all at least somewhat against the grain of what was the norm in their schools or what they themselves had been accustomed to doing over time. Kate and Nicole have helped each other broaden their perspectives by discussing with each other what each of the districts in which they work provide and require in their early literacy curriculums. Strengthening their sense that they each do work in a "box" of established conditions for curriculum, both have been more able to think beyond these boundaries using the unfamiliar from their partner's district as steeping-off points. Accordingly, both have become more cautious and critical of what is taken as conventional in their schools. Kate mentions specifically giving up the string of "cutesy" holiday art projects that other first grade teachers have done literally for decades in favor of a more substantive art docent program for her classroom. Nancy talked as well about adopting a more independent stance toward her district's new reading and writing curriculum, a curriculum that she values in many respects. Yet, Nancy found it not to meet her interest in small group conversation for serious engagement with literature or to promote children's spontaneous thinking. Not only is she more concerned with such possibilities for learning in general, she is unwilling to believe that any curriculum design or model cannot incorporate them. Rachel, too, explained how she has become more dedicated to the idea of deeply stimulating children's thinking and capacity for inquiry, and unwilling to be bound by usual classroom practices, including most of what she had experienced or done herself.

Describing her concentration in constructivist mathematics and seeking more constructivist moments in other curriculum areas, Jane spoke directly to how a teacher's inclination to "see" more fully and more clearly what is "not there" in the typical classroom situation, as well as what is, stands beyond moving further and further in the direction of the unconventional.

> I know enough about the stages of teacher development to know that I am clearly beyond the very first level of survival teaching, establishing tried and true methods, and experiencing them working consistently over time with good success. I am out one of those later stages where I am expanding beyond what I have relied upon at first to be successful. I am diversifying, trying out different formats of teaching that are more energizing and exciting for kids, asking kids for feedback and always thinking about how to improve more. I am concentrating now in the constructivist math with translating the standards into curriculum guides and classroom activities, but am looking also at how I do reading and writing, as well as math.

All the other teachers spoke, using examples from their own experience, of their growing consciousness of what was not present as well as what is present, especially what is typically taken for granted about the official mandates for curriculum and the typical patterns of implementing them. Continually looking beyond is certainly characteristic of all the teachers. Moreover, the teachers all were conscious of noticing and being alert to unplanned or unforeseen occurrences that offer serendipitous

opportunities to further interests growing more important as teachers spend more time and effort in pursuing them. Gabe described how, even in view of his veteran status in teaching, he is constantly reflecting on what he does with his foreign language students, turning over in his mind possible alternatives that might make the curriculum more accessible and more meaningful to them. He mentioned the importance of classroom events, perhaps subtle, but in some way surprising or out of the ordinary, to fuel this process of reflection.

As did Gabe, the other teachers described their intention to keep themselves open to the significance of the unanticipated as a means of seeing beyond or seeing differently. Rachel noted that she solidified an important strategy for inquiry-based curriculum initiative by considering her students' pleas for more direction in their early research activities, but deciding not to yield much on requiring independence—a move which proved beneficial in the long run. In Rachel's case it was important that she took the event seriously, but did not respond as she might easily have. It was out of an unexpected classroom observation that Hope's inquiry project grew. As she involved special needs students more and more in her classroom, Hope was surprised to see the genuine friendships that seemed to grow up between groups of children who initially seemed so different and so unalike. These seemed to grow up without particular coaching, although with a carefully arranged environment and clear ground rules. Hope began to be actively interested in whether such friendships or at least unforced mutual liking and casual interaction would occur in other classroom settings if the conditions were similarly established. In a sort of reverse twist on the theme of serendipitous possibility, Nancy decided to try a parent-child reading group as her inquiry project. She had been looking into this sort of reading group as a young parent, but came to appreciate its broader educational value. She decided to try it out as an extracurricular activity, in effect, on a middle ground between home and school, later to decide whether and how to incorporate the model into her literacy curriculum.

As the consciousness of alternatives grows, the more implicit images of what might be done—the hunch of what lies beyond the immediate—comes to underpin more comprehensive and explicit plans to do what has been differently imagined. At this point teachers set goals for their intentions so as to create different paths for curriculum shaped according to changed key elements: long-term organizing strategies, core activities and classroom relationships, materials and other resources, timing, integration with other learning, means of assessment, involvement in out-of-classroom settings. All teachers described how the feel, concerns and dynamics of their classrooms had evolved significantly as they posited and set out to realize their new goals for curriculum.

The teachers approach setting new goals in a variety of ways. Most mention the opportunity given them in the degree program to rethink and to clearly define what they wish to accomplish and how. Rachel described how she had prepared herself carefully and thoroughly for her inquiry project, setting up her model unit to involve students in finding resources and representing key information about ancient Mesopotamian civilization, all the while deepening their sense of the human character and nature of ordinary lives in this era. Barbara spoke similarly of her diligent planning of peer mentoring and mutual understanding programs for her autistic students and counterpart general education students. And Hope recounted how the deliberate process of planning she was encouraged to do in several of her courses has lead her to gradually piece together the "puzzle" of well-developed curriculum:

> Gosh, there's always something else you can do and another piece of the puzzle you can add . . . add another piece in place and see how it works, and when you have that piece you add another piece. Being in the master's program has really made me think about what pieces to add next rather than being kind of random.

Most of the teachers also admitted that from time to time they set aside those special times and spaces for highly valued learning, almost sequestering themselves and their children "behind closed doors" to get into what counted most in their eyes—for which they had set the highest goals. These could be reading and writing favorite stories, discussing current issues in the school or in the world, following a

spontaneous topic on exploration to wherever it might lead, paying attention to things growing in the world around us, or trying to grasp how the whole universe could be expanding.

Nearly all the teachers also explicitly noted how the most ambitious goals they set for their curriculum are dependent upon what occurs or can be made to happen in larger contexts. Gabe talked about the boost his program would get from foreign language being taught in the elementary schools in his district. Rachel and Nancy speak of the value of added resources drawn from libraries, bookstores, or electronic sources for their projects. Jane spoke to the need to coordinate assessment approaches among teacher as well as within any single classroom, and to align curriculum sequences in math and other areas across grades and school levels. As did Jane, Barbara and Hope underscored how important collaboration among teachers can be; in their situations, crossing the usual imposing boundaries between general and special education programs offered the greatest challenge and promise at once.

As the teachers set bolder and broader goals, they moved toward and captured at least partial new visions of their curriculum, approaching what we would understand as visions of recultured curriculum. With all the teachers these visions offered more profoundly human learning and hope of greater personal well being. Some of what the teachers said further indicated reconstructions of beliefs about knowledge and social relationships, setting their curriculum orientations apart from what typically prevails in schools today.

These teachers are now more able to discern a promising direction, or perhaps fashion a sense of direction, from what could otherwise easily be perceived as the muddled, cloudy, or contradictory nature of everyday school situations. As these individuals became more certain of their curricular purpose, gained accumulated experience in areas of interest, and became more knowledgeable of what other educators working toward the same purposes had accomplished, their insight and creative imagination sharpened correspondingly. Heightened consciousness became linked to deliberate goal setting around central purposes and to more systematic articulation of vision as explicit reconstruction of the organizing categories of curriculum and schooling. The following section explores in greater detail teachers moving to alternative visions and deeper commitment to the enrichment of their own students and others participating in the larger realm of schooling.

Action and Engagement: Commitment and Vision

The preceding analyses have portrayed the ambitious, challenging curriculum ventures that the teachers have undertaken. Most said that there was a sense of risk or at least of a weighing uncertainty at the outset. But eventually their determined efforts met with at least some degree of tangible success. The sense of satisfaction and exhilaration following from their accomplishments, as noted, lead to considering goals that could stretch more and more the boundaries of classroom practice and even of school structures. Such a redoubling of intention brought all the teachers into new levels of commitment and into the realm of bringing forth new vision, that in various degrees for the teachers set their eyes and their energy toward the possibility of recultured classrooms and schools.

All the teachers spoke of how their new initiatives in effect challenged the traditional sorts of spaces in which school learning occurs and often extended into contexts beyond the walls of their classrooms. Nicole, while acknowledging the unavoidable responsibility to address the core objectives, or standards, of her district's curriculum, managed to preserve the meaningfulness and enjoyment of authentic learning by organizing lessons periodically to respond to her children's natural curiosities. And Kate described the flexibility of her system of clear guidelines and expectations for classroom activity, while allowing children great flexibility of movement and self-chosen work partners. Together they continue to think about what they can contribute to each other from their own school situations and resources, enlarging the context of curriculum to virtually span their two classrooms.

Rachel, too, has overturned many key traditional norms of instruction, calling upon her children to follow personal interests, guide their own path of study more independently, and discover and present the relevant facts of an area of study in a form that captures basic knowledge of that area. Speaking of the engaging force of constructivist learning, Jane noted how powerfully her students are drawn into

experiential, problem-oriented learning. She also distinguishes clearly between learning that is merely fun and learning which, while enjoyable, takes its appeal from the intrinsic draw of discovering and understanding when the starting point was genuine puzzlement. And Hope talked of her joy in witnessing the sort of social growth that her students demonstrated from their extended interactions with special needs children in mutually respectful relationships. Learning is clearly much more than the narrow academic focused that may be encouraged by standardized assessment and regimented objectives.

> I see more understanding and patience from my students. They are now much more accepting about special education kids. I saw my students helping a hearing impaired children in a combined PE class. My kids never complained [about the combined class], but I saw another class where regular education students complained about being in a class with special education students. In fact, my students showed empathy for a special needs student who had a bathroom accident in class; there was no teasing of the child. Their ability to empathize with their special needs peers I find quite remarkable.

Hope is one of the several teachers we interviewed who broadened the context for their curriculums physically as well as through ideas, resources, and collaboration. Gabe is actively sponsoring his high school students' teaching of foreign language to elementary schools, an initiative that advances his students' learning as well as that of the children they teach. Ultimately, Gabe is hoping to lend his help to an effort to institute elementary-level foreign language teaching in his district, thereby preparing students with advanced language competency by the time of their entrance into high school. Nancy has begun her evening parent-child book club in part to give her students and their parents the unique opportunity of inter-generational discussion of good literature. But she also uses the book club to draw insights for her reading curriculum about the possibilities and value of shared exploration of literature among younger children themselves. Barbara's efforts to create active educational and social relationships between the autistic children in her special education class and between herself and the general education teachers in whose classes her children occasionally participate. Mutual learning is of greatest importance to Barbara.

> I have also developed a great sense of purpose in my quest to help my students and their families with their unique needs and rights . . . I feel especially passionate about my goal to help create a connection between the general education students and my special education students. If I can help one child have compassion and concern for people that are different, I will feel greatly satisfied.

The teachers all clearly expressed deep feeling about the new vitality found in their curriculum from the initiatives they have taken to stretch and make it more unconventional. Underlying this sense of renewal and promise is a growing commitment and appreciation for the potential of learning and knowledge to contribute to the quality of experience and the personal well being of their students. Out of the changed curriculum, too, arises commitment to strive for relationships of caring, tolerance, and understanding, relationships that may extend well beyond the classroom. And finally coming into view is the opportunity to bring their curriculum into larger contexts—through collaborations, across classrooms, into various domains of school life, and by becoming part of activities in the larger community that are then interwoven into a more highly textured fabric of curriculum

As the teachers engaged their bold initiatives, recast their educational goals, and deepened commitments to their students and others in the school and community, they moved toward and captured at least partial new visions of their curriculum, approaching what we would understand as visions of re-cultured curriculum. These visions expressed core beliefs that learning and knowledge can be profoundly human, relationships more generous and mutually invested, and communities more

inclusive and mindful of the critical importance and value of difference. Teachers were not alike in their visions. Which beliefs, grounded in direct experience and practice, they are reconstructing, and the degree of their movement in reconstructing beliefs certainly located the teachers in different positions. Our purpose is not to differentiate the teachers in these position so much as to capture the dimensions around which visions of recultured curriculum may coalesce.

Kate and Nicole together envisioned their children learning without the anxiety and rush of overwrought regimentation driven by the mania of standards mandates. Rachel cited the sort of knowledge that independent early adolescents can generate with helpful teacher facilitation, their natural curiosities and interests encouraged, their discoveries promoted by a flexible, yet critical attitude toward their objectives, and their understanding disciplined by the responsibility to organize and convey to others what they have come to know.

Others of the teachers imagine how a different sort of curriculum can foster heightened awareness of people for one another and sensitive contact that can become shared concern. Hope pointed out how such relationships grow steadily from activities that deliberately value respect and reciprocal attention and common benefit. Those who have themselves achieved the knowledge and understanding model their learning for others to follow. Relationships as the basis for authentic learning is part of Nancy's evolving vision of intergenerational learning, and, more broadly, relationships that provide for serious, extended, and thoughtful conversation around examples of unusual human achievement, such as good literature.

Visions of a recultured curriculum also encompass changed contexts in which and through which children's learning may take place. Jane described her vision of a "true constructivist school" in which knowledge rises "organically" from the animated pursuit of topics and problems likely taking a "million directions." Such as school would promote integrated curriculum, a pace to learning set by the children's various natural rhythms, permeable boundaries between age levels, seamlessly orchestrated contributions by teachers who each possess special expertise, and an end to the current fragmentation of schedules, activities, and administrative procedures. In a similar vein, Gabe considered the possibility of foreign language instruction across all grades as a educational and social platform on which wider cultural knowledge, appreciation, tolerance and justice could be anchored. Multicultural learning would naturally spread through the schools into the community and back in return.

The more far-reaching the vision teachers held of learning in recultured curriculum extending into the community, the greater the implication for new forms of participation in the shaping of that curriculum by all members of the communities involved. Barbara spoke most directly to this sort of participation. Teachers, certainly in her view, should be key players in decisions about students and school standards and goals. Parents, seldom near the center of deliberations, also should be primary decision-makers. Board members would respect above all the worth of parents' and teachers' contributions in discharging their duties. And administrators have a critical place, as they currently do, but in a different pattern of authority: they best can do "what they currently do, but with the parents and teachers as their leaders." What Barbara most explicitly suggested, the other teachers have touched upon as well. To reculture curriculum, and thus ultimately schooling, there must be a struggle for curriculum leadership.

Perceptions of Leadership

It is clear from our knowledge about the work of the eight teachers in their classrooms, schools, and districts that they exhibit various forms of leadership. They have all have challenged the status quo and have brought about changes that have allowed them to do what they feel has a greater moral consequence for their students. In doing so, they have become models for their colleagues and/or have been willing to stake out positions and defend their ideas to colleagues, administrators, and parents. The interviews also offer impressions that the teachers hold of themselves as leaders.

Several of the younger teachers described situations in which they are beginning to emerge in leadership roles in their schools and districts. Nancy explained that "I always start off slow and later kick

in . . . as a young teacher I don't have the authority or the experience so I stay pretty mellow . . . I try to greet new teachers and offer support." She reported that she has shared her ideas in a district-wide grade-level and related an incident in which "I spoke up in a district meeting against scoring second-graders' writing — zapping them. I don't want kids to lose their enthusiasm when they are just beginning to write – a bunch of teachers clapped when I said this." Kate mentioned that older teachers come to her to learn new techniques and Nicole told us that she has been designated her grade level team leader and that "I am able to lead where it is needed." Nancy, Kate, and Nicole all express the sense of stepping up to the plate when needed and can express their reasoned opinions abut practice.

Other teachers evidently hold images of formal leadership when they contemplated their own leadership. Hope commented that she had assumed more of a leadership role in her school until she began her masters program and finds herself too busy to attend to more than her classrooms. She also commented that "During discussions at lunch, I cannot afford an opinion, because if I had one, I'd have to do something about it" – suggesting to us that she understands that leadership entails involvement in action for making changes. Gabe, who at this time has been trying to develop a leadership plan to bring foreign language instruction into elementary schools, also has a sense of formal leadership – of bringing about change and guiding his colleagues. He did not describe himself as a leader at the moment but said that he is "waiting for my chance" as he "tries to figure out the best moment to go further."

Rachel, as did Nancy, talked about the lack of opportunity for her to be a leader in her school. "At my grade level, teachers have been teaching a long time and they more or less do things their way, and they are the leaders, there isn't a spot for me within the grade level to be a leader, and so we can kind of share but they have been running the show for a long time." When we asked Rachel if she sees herself as a leader, she revealed that she understood leadership in a more formal role; "I'd feel more like a leader if I was standing up and a conference and teaching colleagues," she said. However, she felt that in a sense all teachers take on leadership roles. She views doing leadership in her work as a teacher who is "researching the best way for kids to learn." She explained that "this is what being a teacher is about – exploring new ideas . . . I do not see myself in a leadership role, I see my colleagues doing the same thing on a daily basis, exploring, researching . . . figuring out the best way to do things. Barbara also sees herself in a leadership role as a teacher but equates being a leader with activism:

> I hope to help others appreciate this unique and important district program in our building . . . I consider myself a teacher that believes in advocating for my student's rights, helping others to learn about and appreciate diversity and disabilities to eradicate prejudice and discrimination towards those that are less fortunate and or different, and to be myself no matter what the work climate is around me. I lead by example at this point. After I've been teaching longer I'll have the experience and wisdom to lead with activism.

Jane, of all the teachers, has the most defined sense of herself as a leader. She described how she "works as leader and has lots of responsibilities." She has participated in district cadre and had approached principal to do cadre within the school to improve curriculum. Jane talked about her image of herself as a "cheerleader" who tries "to get other teachers excited about constructivist math." Although she feels most sure of her leadership in the math area, she is clearly aware of her role and that "having official leader label has allowed her to cheerlead all teachers in the building."

As teachers take bolder initiatives, framed in language that more sharply expresses goals that increasingly stretch the boundaries of the conventional and the status quo, they move toward deepening commitments to learning, relationships, and community and more explicit articulation of a renewed vision of curriculum that rests on reculturing—reconstructing assumptions. As a whole teachers are in a fluid movement of changing consciousness, engagement, vision and standpoint that we term emerging leadership. They are now in the struggle for curriculum leadership and, individually, and may take a number of modal positions marked by particular state of consciousness, engagement, and vision. This sort of leadership is not confined to the conventional school leadership roles. Our teachers are still

evolving their understanding of leadership. They certainly realize that many who are not officially designated leaders can offer informal leadership or in effect be preparing for leadership by the quality and significance of what they think, value, plan for, and attempt. It would be for our teachers to come to a further understanding of how in the struggle for curriculum leadership that we a focused upon, the best and most effective leadership may well lay outside the official roles or these roles can be dramatically redefined.

Emergent Curriculum Leadership and Reculturing

Given the present situation of most American schools and teachers, recultured curriculum lies on the distant horizon of future possibility; it is a possibility that is hardly in clear view. "At root, the problem of reform is a problem of teachers' learning — understanding how to translate new standards, curricula, and theories of learning into effective educational experiences for all their students" (McLaughlin & Oberman, 1996, p. x). But teachers can imagine the vision of such a possibility and imagine themselves in new identities as powerful and dedicated creators of it. Within a clear vision of recultured curriculum, teachers can articulate the framing ideals, standards, and organizing categories, bring together ideas and desires, and catalyze various initiatives to attain their vision. Starting this endeavor, teachers become emergent leaders for transformative curriculum and school change. The end-in-view is distant on the horizon and there is difficult terrain to be crossed, paths of various kinds and indigenous challenges. As teachers attempt to cross the long terrain, their leadership is continuously emerging in response to the challenges they encounter and the struggles they undertake to reconstitute curriculum and renew themselves as practitioners. The outcome therefore is that teachers will possess new identities in their characteristic roles, and hold a dramatically changed orientation to study, understanding, development, interaction and regard for one another and their students. "New roles and their correspondent images will continue to evolve and to be shaped by the decisions that teachers make for themselves and with others" (Burnaford & Hobson, 2001, p. 241).

The struggle of emergent curriculum leadership has its existential side. When teachers seek to institute the new meaning systems of recultured curriculum, they must embrace the new identities and orientations imparted to those participating in it. Becoming a curriculum leader itself calls for a significant leap of faith to a recast identity and professional orientation. And this compounds upon the new sense of self-as-teacher lodged in the recultured curriculum being pursued. The process of curriculum leadership is thus always coming to moments in which personal histories and professional careers are in existential balance: moments when the risk and unfamiliarity and exhilaration of reaching for possibilities of profound change—interim steps toward their ultimate vision— hover around the decision to engage lightly, heavily, or not at all. This vortex of complicated feeling is not all of the story either. Teachers further realize that it is impossible to estimate very precisely what will actually come of their foray—how the perceived possibility will turn out.

As teachers acquire a new vision of curriculum transformation and bring themselves to reach for the uncertain, they must continue to develop a practical capability to enact suitably recultured curriculum in their own classrooms. These efforts would necessarily entail at least some significant connections to the world beyond the classroom, drawing upon informational and classroom-based resources, people and contacts, collaboration with parents and the community, professional networks and programs, colleagues within the school, support from administrators, advice from specialists. We cannot underestimate or under-value teachers having the "technology of recultured curriculum" in hand — and this can only come from carefully directed professional learning grounded closely in a plan for changing curriculum so as to conform with its reconstructed organizing categories. Nor can we underestimate the importance of working "politically" to change the larger school context—the infrastructure of the institutional school, so to speak—as the vehicle toward establishing the larger conditions for a recultured classroom curriculum

In their continually emerging leadership, teachers also give themselves over to a steadily deepening commitment to what a "good curriculum" and a "good education" would mean in the lives of

students now and in the future. This commitment seems to be expressed initially and more immediately in what may be thought of as a "moral concern" for the lives of one's own students. A later and broader focus of this concern for human well being is turned to the lives of students more generally, a more "ethical sociopolitical" focus that expands outward from the classroom to more distant school locales. The evolving commitment of emerging teacher leadership for recultured curriculum and schooling provides the "fire for engagement" that sustains teachers, and renews them, along the way.

In originally introducing the idea of curriculum cultures, we turned first to the broader conception of culture itself — taking culture essentially to be the whole of meaning-making shared by individuals who are members of a society or social group. Within systems and organizing categories that make up culture, people create meaning, and meaning creates people (Hannerz, 1992). Without culture there is no enduring and coherent social interaction, no stable relationships, patterns of communication, or institutional formations. There could be no human sense or quality to shared living without the meaning imparted by underlying values, beliefs, taken-for-granted assumptions, purposes, and normative expectations. Individuals would have no personal identity, orientation to their work, feeling of stability, compelling desire, or devoted attachments to others. As curriculum is thoroughly cultural, it persists ultimately as a relatively stable and well-acknowledged system of meaning-making anchored its own distinctive organizing categories: beliefs, values and normative expectations concerning learning, knowledge, normative behavior, and social relationships and practices.

In considering the reform of classroom curriculum and schooling, our position is that such reform turns on re-culturing curriculum; that is, rethinking, recreating, and recommitting to curriculum that is quite different in its defining activities, resources, and goals. More fundamentally, it is a curriculum that imparts unconventional meaning to learning, knowledge, and social relationships. To aim for reform defined as re-cultured curriculum (and, necessarily, the required institutional infrastructure of the local school) is nothing less than momentous. In its fullest measure reculturing means deliberate transformation of the curriculum and of schooling.

The vision of recultured curriculum entails an increasingly comprehensive and explicit *reconstruction* of the organizing categories of curriculum culture—especially learning, knowledge, the student and the teacher, and the sort of social world that both fosters and is furthered by reconstructed curriculum, curriculum that challenges the status quo culture. The root of such a reconstruction is awareness and conviction that the curriculum, which prevails in schools today, is not good for children, for teachers, for schools, for society. Such a reconstruction represents a radical rethinking of the taken-for-granted organizing categories of curriculum culture. This is process of serious reflection and interpretation-re-interpretation of the world of school as it exists.

In her recent article on teacher-centered reform, Cohen (2002) reminds us:

> Almost 20 years ago Sara Lawrence Lightfoot told us that successful high schools are those that possess powerful traditions and embedded norms. In the best schools . . . values are consistent and known; they are embodied in the experiences of everyday life . . . .If a school is to have a powerful ethos, it is the *teachers* who must communicate it, embody it, transmit it. Indeed, teachers are the one stable influence on a culture that is, by definition, always in flux. (Cohen, 2002, p. 533).

The teachers we have worked with in our program may indeed do more than tinkering but are taking steps toward creating coherent and traditions, norms, and ethos. Indeed, we understand curriculum leadership as the understanding of and the taking of action toward reculturing – an evolving process in which teachers work to transform their practice and the contexts of their work and, in turn, are transformed by the possibilities in their recreated cultures. These teachers are critically situated to renew, recreate, and sustain the reculturing of their classrooms and schools.

Notes

1. Although students have developed inquiry projects around the issues raised in the Diversity & Equity core course, the authors did not collaborate with the instructors for that course at this time and thus it will not be the focus of this paper. Also, whenever possible, a faculty member of color has taught the Diversity & Equity class.

2. For educators who are, for example, in between jobs, contemplating a career shift, or on leave, the inquiry project often involves learning about exemplary practice, e.g., studying the strategies of exemplary mathematics teachers or peace educators, or doing a critical analysis of curriculum, e.g., environmental education in elementary schools.

3. The Campus-Based students who are not working full-time often use this opportunity to visit new settings, e.g., alternate schools; most of the Campus-Based students who were working full time and almost all of the Site-Based Program students studied their own classrooms and schools.

4. Interview Protocols:
    1. Where are you putting most of your energy now in your classroom work and work in your school?
    2. Where are you putting most of your energy now in the master's program?
    3. Do you view or understand your curriculum any differently now than before you became involved with your master's program, especially the inquiry project?
    4. In this period what have been your feelings about your teaching and yourself as teacher?
    5. Do you view or understand any differently beyond-the-classroom influences, resources, or contributing factors as they relate to how you do your classroom curriculum?
    6. Can you say how or from what experiences any new understandings of your classroom curriculum and beyond-the-classroom influences or factors came about?
    7. Do you view yourself in a leadership role?
    8. What would be the ideal teaching situation?

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